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Message Text

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ACTION OS-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 CU-05 AID-07 L-03 SP-03 /031 W
---------- 027533
R 161145Z SEP 74
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8643
INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

UNCLAS JIDDA 5375

FOR DR. GORDON PARSONS

E.O. 11652 NA
TAGS: ASCH, SA
SUBJECT: ASSISTANCE TO OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

SUMMARY: BECAUSE OF RAPIDLY EXPANDING US COMMUNITY IN SAUDI ARABIA, NEW SCHOOLS MUST BE ESTABLISHED IN JIDDA AND RIYADH FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR, AND IN DHAHRAN SOON THEREAFTER. MINISTER OF DEFENSE PRINCE SULTAN MAY BE PREPARED TO ASSIST IN ESTABLISHING SUCH SCHOOLS BY GRANT OF REAL ESTATE AT EACH SITE. REQUEST ADVICE FROM DEPARTMENT AS TO WHAT ASSISTANCE SUCH SCHOOLS COULD RECEIVE RE CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION, CURRICULUM ADVICE, AND INTERVIEWING AND SELECTION OF TEACHERS. COUR DR. PARSONS VISIT SAUDI ARABIA TO ADVISE US COMMUNITY LEADERS? END SUMMARY.

1. FOR SEVERAL WEEKS AMBASSADOR HAS BEEN REVIEWING WITH THE HEADS OF US COMPANIES IN SAUDI ARABIA AND WITH HEAD MASTERS OF US COMMUNITY SCHOOLS THE SCHOOLING PROBLEMS THAT US FAMILIES IN SAUDI ARABIA WILL FACE STARTING SEPTEMBER 1975. BY NEXT FALL, JIDDA'S PARENT'S COOPERATIVE SCHOOL (UNDER SAUDIA MANAGEMENT) MAY BE VIRTUALLY FILLED BY SAUDIA CHILDREN. SAUDIA HAS TAKEN AN APPARENTLY FIRM DECISION, MOREOVER, NOT TO EXPAND BEYOND ITS PRESENT CAPACITY OF ABOUT 800 STUDENTS. THIS WILL LEAVE US WITH A PROJECTED OVERAGE OF SOME 400 STUDENTS; THIS NUMBER SHOULD APPROACH 1000 WITHIN THREE TO FOUR YEARS TIME. IN RIYADH, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL THIS YEAR HAS A GRAND TOTAL OF 213 STUDENTS; THERE ARE FIRM FIGURES AVAILABLE FOR THE 1975-76 SCHOOL YEAR
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THAT THIS NUMBER WILL INCREASE TO 455 STUDENTS. IN THE

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EASTERN PROVINCE, THE DHAHRAN ACADEMY NOW ENROLLS 509
STUDENTS WHOSE NUMBER IS PROJECTED TO REACH 1000-1200 BY THE
YEAR 1980. COMMUNITY LEADERS CONCLUDE, THEREFORE, THAT A NEW
SCHOOL MUST BE SET UP IN JIDDA FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR, THAT
A NEW SCHOOL SHOULD BE SET UP IN RIYADH THAT WOULD REPLACE THE
ICS, AND THAT A SIMILAR REPLACEMENT SCHOOL MUST BE CREATED IN
DHAHRAN BY THE 1976-77 SCHOOL YEAR AT THE LATEST. (NEITHER
THE RIYADH NOR THE DHAHRAN SCHOOLS CAN BE EXPANDED IN THEIR
PRESENT LOCATIONS.)

2. AMBASSADOR AKINS HAS DRAWN MINISTER OF DEFENSE PRINCE
SULTAN'S ATTENTION TO THE AMERICAN SCHOOLING PROBLEM.
HE HAS TOLD PRINCE THAT SINCE LARGE MAJORITY OF STUDENTS
IN THESE SCHOOLS ARE HERE IN CONNECTION WITH MODA CONTRACTS
WITH LOCKHEED, NORTHROP, AND RAYTHEON, A SCHOOLING BOTTLENECK
WOULD COMPLICATE RECRUITMENT OF US PERSONNEL AND WOULD VERY
LIKELY DEFER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINISTRY'S DEVELOPMENT
PLANS. AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED THAT IF US COMMUNITIES IN JIDDA,
RIYADH AND DHAHRAN COULD BE ASSISTED THROUGH LAND GRANT FROM
MODA, SCHOOLING PROBLEM WOULD BE A LONG WAY TOWARD SOLUTION.
LAND PRICES IN VICINITY OF ALL OF THESE CITIES ARE PROHIBITIVELY
HIGH, BUT IF LAND AVAILABLE, US COMMUNITY COULD DO THE
REST. AMBASSADOR ALSO INDICATED SCHOOL CURRICULA WOULD HAVE
TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH US STANDARDS AND TRADITIONS (I.E.,
COEDUCATIONAL CLASSES WITHOUT INSPECTION BY RELIGIOUS
MINISTRY).

3. SULTAN WAS SYMPATHETIC AND SAID HE COULD HELP US COMMUNITY
IF HE WERE GIVEN A STUDY OUTLINING NEEDS AND MAKING
RECOMMENDATIONS. AMBASSADOR PLANS TO MEET AGAIN WITH
BUSINESS AND SCHOOL LEADERS IN ABOUT A WEEK. THEREAFTER
HE HOPES TO GIVE SULTAN SOME SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS ABOUT
THE AMOUNTS OF REAL ESTATE NEEDED FOR THE NEW AMERICAN
SCHOOLS. AT SUCH MEETING AMBASSADOR WILL POINT OUT
TO BUSINESS LEADERS NEED FOR THEM TO RAPIDLY COORDINATE
AMONG THEMSELVES THE PRACTICAL DETAILS OF ESTABLISHING
A SCHOOL. EMBASSY CAN TAKE THE LEAD WITH SULTAN, BUT
THEREAFTER THE RESOURCES OF THE PRIVATE COMMUNITY OF
MORE THAN 10,000 VASTLY EXCEED THOSE OF THE EMBASSY.

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4. FOR SUCH A MEETING IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF EMBASSY
COULD BE GIVEN SOME INFORMATION (PER 2 FAM 600) ABOUT
ASSISTANCE AMERICAN SCHOOLS IN SAUDI ARABIA COULD OBTAIN
FROM DEPARTMENT FOR CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION, CURRICULUM
ADVICE, AND THE INTERVIEWING AND SELECTION OF TEACHERS.
IN VIEW OF THE SIZE OF SCHOOL PROJECTS, WOULD DR. PARSONS
BELIEVE IT USEFUL TO VISIT SAUDI ARABIA AND PROVIDE
GUIDANCE TO SCHOOL BOARDS AND PRIVATE INDUSTRY OFFICIALS?

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